

**Planning Commission  
Minutes  
March 4, 2024  
7:00 PM**

**Present:**

Brett MacKay  
Nancy Becker  
Douglas Leach  
Dennis McGeehan  
Michael Main  
Matt Chartrand  
Patricia Younce  
Joseph Vavra

**Absent:**

Ed Buonocore

**Staff:**

Will Brugger, Director of Planning, Zoning and Land Development  
Mary Stover, Township Engineer CKS

Supervisor Mr. Kofi Osei was present.

**Approval of the February 5, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Becker made a motion to approve the February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024 meeting minutes, Mr. Leach seconded. Mr. Vavra and Ms. Younce abstained. All were in favor.

**New Business:**

Updated Main Street Proposal Concept - PSDC

Presented by: Mr. Matthew McHugh, attorney Klehr, Harrison, Harvey & Branzburg, LLP.  
Mr. John Alejnikov, Bohler Engineering and Mr. John Peruto, PSDC

Mr. McHugh explained they are presenting a new proposal since the last proposal was presented before or during the covid time frame. He explained they have been revisiting the project and they have incorporated some additional property near the turnpike, and they have refined the development for a true “live, work, play” area. They are proposing office space, low level retail, restaurant, and a cohesive concept. He stated they are here tonight to propose this new concept plan and see what the Planning Commission members think about this plan so that they can get feedback and they can go back and develop a plan that is suitable for this area.

Mr. McHugh presented an overview of the original piece shown on the proposed map. Mr. McHugh explained each building and what they would represent. He stated this is a more dense area and he showed the existing buildings and what those buildings may be repurposed as some living or apartment style buildings.

Mr. Peruto explained this is a harmony of uses. Mr. Alejnikov explained they concentrated on connectivity for pedestrians and maintaining some version of the trail that is on the property. On the west side, they will propose taller four-story buildings consistent with what will exist on the other side. He stated they are working with taking parts of the Village Overlay and drafting an amendment to possibly allow this. There will be a text amendment in black and white showing what is allowed, and this is something they are still working through and why they are presenting to the Planning Commission members to get feedback on this Plan C.

Mr. Vavra and Ms. Younce stated they have reservations regarding the height, especially for residential. Discussion regarding more office and retail space and if they have the required percentages. The applicant stated they did not at this time. They are aware of density and feel this is appropriately sized.

Ms. Becker confirmed there would be about 480 residential units total and Mr. Peruto stated yes, on both sides.

Ms. Younce feels Towamencin has serious traffic issues and would like to keep in mind that these additions will add to this. Mr. Peruto stated they will do traffic studies and comply with any improvements that will be required.

Ms. Younce was asked about the 180 apartment units on Towamencin Ave that already exist and stated her opinion is that she is against adding a lot of units and still maintaining a good quality of life in this area.

Mr. McHugh believes there will be many people that will work, eat, play in this development and this is the overall concept. It makes it attractive to people to live there and then they don't impact the traffic as heavily.

Discussion regarding what works and what will become a successful development. Conceptionally this is the type of layout that they want to start moving forward with.

Mr. Vavra stated the Planning Commission and Towamencin are working on the Comprehensive Plan and asked if the developers were aware of this. Mr. Peruto stated they did have a meeting with Mr. Simone, and he seemed supportive of this concept, and they are continuing to work with the Township.

Mr. Main mentioned his concern about the impact this will have on the Township emergency services.

Mr. Peruto stated they will have the Fire Marshall and Chief review all the plans as well.

Mr. Main explained he is not just concerned with the development, but the additional number of people and workers, etc. and having the right emergency service staff available.

Mr. Peruto agreed and feels the additional tax base will cover additional staff members for those services.

Mr. Main asked if PSDC owned all the proposed areas, and they showed on the map the part they do not own. Ms. Becker asked if the area they did not own is open space and they stated yes. PSDC feels they can provide other options.

Discussion regarding how the development will look.

Mr. MacKay asked if anyone in the audience had any questions.

Ms. Anna McCreary of 1809 Hickory Court spoke and stated she does not feel this is helpful for our schools and is concerned about storm water runoff and suggested a garage instead of all the new impervious. It appears like it is all the development in this area, and it will impact the traffic. She feels this is a floodgate and feels if they don't limit this, they won't limit anything.

Supervisor Osei spoke and stated he was only speaking for himself. He explained he is against the idea of the parking area and not concerned about the number of units. Mr. Osei feels most of the traffic concerns are coming the other way. He is in favor of the possible idea of making the Main Street walkable for the entire area. Mr. Osei explained the pedestrian bridge is there for this purpose and feels this space is very empty for being the main area of this Township.

Mr. MacKay if there were any additional comments. Mr. Peruto stated they plan to be back to the Planning Commission to provide updates, meet with the Board of Supervisors and they hope for a successful development.

Ms. Becker mentioned she liked the idea of retail on one side of the road.

**Additional Business:**

Mr. Brugger explained the Township had communications with Custom Craft on 1111 Forty Foot Road, near the corner of Quarry and Forty Foot. Custom Cabinetry and Builder's current site is zoned C - Commercial. Mr. Brugger stated they are looking to expand and recently purchased a residential parcel next to them at 1153 Forty Foot Road. Towamencin staff agrees it would make sense to try and rezone, and explained the owners of Custom Craft are here tonight to explain their plan.

Presenting a plan tonight: Mr. George Foering, Mr. Mike Foering -owners, and Mr. Sam Kim - Architect

Mr. Foering explained they are presenting their idea tonight to explore opportunities to expand their current space. He explained their company and that they are currently at 1111 Forty Foot

Road and recently purchased 1153 Forty Foot Road, which is the property next to them. Mr. Foering stated their current space is commercial and they work as a design center. He explained they are growing, they have good client reviews, and they would like to show a bigger design center. Mr. Foering stated the purchased property at 1153 Forty Foot Road is zoned residential and they would like to work with the Township to rezone it to commercial and they would like to get some feedback from the Planning Commission on merging the lots and creating a professional center for office space and showroom space.

Mr. Michael Foering presented slides showing the merging of the two lots. He showed slides of the existing buildings and what they look like from the street view. He showed a plot plan of the proposed design. Mr. Foering showed the two buildings and the plan to combine the two lots and create a larger design center.

Mr. MacKay asked the Planning Commission members if they have any issues with the proposed rezoning presented before them.

Ms. Younce asked if the property goes to the side street on Quarry and Mr. Foering said it did. Mr. Chartrand mentioned the Easter Seals and stated it should be added to the rezoning.

Mr. Brugger asked if the Planning Commission members would like to see staff work on this to rezone. The commission all agreed that they would be interested. Mr. Main agreed that the whole area should be looked at to rezone. Mr. Chartrand also agreed and stated he is happy they are doing well and able to expand.

Discussion regarding the surrounding properties. Mr. MacKay suggested they put together a formal submission and that staff work on some rezoning.

Ms. Becker asked what the residential property will be turned into for the business and Mr. Foering explained it will mostly be for staff and offices. Ms. Younce asked if this is just one business and Mr. Michael Foreign stated they would structure the building and site for growth with the idea they could possibly lease some space to other design professionals or architects.

Discussion regarding the layout of the proposed building and the access from Quarry Road. Mr. Chartrand stated PennDOT will have a say over the traffic pattern as well as the driveway. Discussion regarding the driveway.

Mr. MacKay thanked the presenters and stated they will see them again.

Mr. MacKay asked if there were any other issues to discuss.

Mr. Brugger provided a brief update on land development issues.

There was a discussion regarding the PSDC shopping center, and it was stated that they attended the Board of Supervisors meeting on 2/28/24 and PSDC explained the shopping center and Main Street concept. They mentioned the latest may be a Whole Foods coming in, as well as the possibility of a Target going behind the SKF site.

Mr. Chartrand clarified that the zoning is not in place for a Target in that area. Mr. Brugger stated it depends on how big the Target would be. Ms. Stover stated they will have to get rid of the residential portion of this for it to move forward.

Ms. Dorothy (Dottie) D'Amato 1810 Hickory Way, spoke from the audience.

Ms. D'Amato came to the meeting because of the PSDC development and their proposed plans. Her house backs Tomlinson and she stated that the shopping center has been vacant for a long time. She feels like they are gobbling up residential and now encroaching on residential. Traffic has increased so much and the trees have been removed. She expressed how much you can hear the turnpike now and she's afraid if they develop this land as commercial it will just get so much worse, as well as traffic getting worse. She feels people here cannot afford a Whole Foods. She would like to see that development moving forward if they could show how to integrate it properly with the existing residential neighborhood. The residents hope for a better effort from PSDC and possibly something to push them into being responsible for what they are developing.

Mr. Dan Clark of 1806 Hickory Way also came to hear about the proposed development on Forty Foot Road and the proposed Target. He stated the other residents described what he is also feeling. When it starts to encroach beyond Dock Woods he is concerned about noise pollution. He suggested the developer explore other options and not encroach on the residential areas.

Ms. Younce asked if when PSDC presented their new plan to the Board of Supervisors, was it mentioned what they would do with the residential land they purchased. Ms. Stover stated it was conceptual and they did not address it.

There was discussion with the residents of Hickory Way as they continued to explain their concerns. They have no issues the shopping center being developed, but to expand it to their development makes no sense. If it gets developed the way it is planned it takes away from the community and changes it so much from the development and the township they moved into years ago.

Mr. MacKay thanked the residents for coming and stated this is the first time the Planning Commission has heard of the proposed plans and suggested they come to the meetings and keep expressing their concerns.

Discussion regarding what the Planning Commission and what it does in the township as well as the Board of Supervisors and what the governing requirements are for the land development process.

More discussion regarding Veteran's Memorial Park, concept plans for this and parking issues.

Mr. MacKay asked if there were any other issues. Hearing none, Ms. Becker made a motion to adjourn at 9:17 PM, and Mr. Main seconded. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,



Carolyn Shisler  
Towamencin Township  
Zoning and Code Enforcement